



Illustrated Fiber Optic Glossary

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P

p: Abbreviation for pico. One trillionth or 10^{-12} .

pA: Abbreviation for picoamp. One trillionth of an Amp or 10^{-12} Amps.

PABX: Abbreviation for private automatic branch exchange. See **PBX**.

Packet: In data communications, a sequence of binary digits, including data and control signals, that is transmitted and switched as a composite whole. The packet contains data, control signals, and possibly error control information, arranged in a specific format.

Packet Switching: The process of routing and transferring data by means of addressed packets so that a channel is occupied during the transmission of the packet only, and upon completion of the transmission the channel is made available for the transfer of other traffic.

PAL: Abbreviation for phase alternation by line. A composite color standard used in many parts of the world for TV broadcast. The phase alternation makes the signal relatively immune to certain distortions (compared to NTSC). Delivers 625 lines at 50 frames per second. PAL-plus is an enhanced-definition version.

Parity: A term used in binary communication systems to indicate whether a number of 1's in a transmission is even or odd. If the number of 1's is even, the parity is said to be even; if the number of 1's is odd, the parity is said to be odd.

1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 5 "1"s = odd parity
1 0 1 0 1 0 0 0 4 "1"s = even parity

Passband: The region of usable frequency in electronics or wavelength in optics.

Passive Branching Device: A device which divides an optical input into two or more optical outputs.



Passive Device: Any device that does not require a source of energy for its operation. Examples include electrical resistors or